

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A microelectronic component comprising at least one barrier layer formed from WN_x , where x is selected in said one barrier layer as a specific value between 0.3 and 0.5.
2. (Original) The microelectronic component of claim 1, further comprising a first layer made of a conductive material adjoining at least one side of the barrier layer formed from WN_x .
3. (Currently Amended) The microelectronic component of claim 2, further comprising a second layer made of a conductive material adjoining the side of the barrier layer formed from WN_x , opposite to the first layer made of [[a]] the conductive material,
wherein the first layer and [[of]] the second layer [[may be]] are comprised of the same conductive material.
4. (Currently Amended) The microelectronic component of claim 3, further comprising a layer stack that is constructed from at least the first layer made of [[a]] the conductive material, the barrier layer formed from WN_x and the second layer made of [[a]] the conductive material forming a contact between an interconnect and a structural element of the microelectronic component.
5. (Currently Amended) The microelectronic component of claim 3, further comprising a layer stack that is constructed from at least the first layer made of [[a]] the conductive material,

the barrier layer formed from WN_x and the second layer made of [[a]] the conductive material forming a gate electrode of a transistor.

6. (Original) The microelectronic component of claim 3, wherein at least one of the first layer and the second layer is constructed from tungsten.

7. (Original) The microelectronic component of claim 3, wherein at least one of the first layer and the second layer being constructed from polysilicon.

8-15. Canceled

16. (New) A microelectronic component comprising:
a first region, the first region comprising a material other than WN ;
a barrier layer overlying and physically touching the first region, the barrier layer comprising a uniform composition layer of WN_x , where x is a substantially constant value between 0.3 and 0.5; and
a material layer overlying and physically touching the barrier layer, wherein the material layer comprises material other than WN .

17. (New) The component of claim 16, wherein the first region comprises a conductor.

18. (New) The component of claim 16 wherein the first region comprises polysilicon.

19. (New) The component of claim 18, wherein the material layer comprises an electrically conductive material.
20. (New) The component of claim 19, wherein the material layer comprises tungsten.
21. (New) The component of claim 16, wherein the first region comprises a tungsten region and wherein the material layer comprises a tungsten layer.
22. (New) The component of claim 16, wherein the first region comprises silicon.
23. (New) The component of claim 16, wherein the material layer comprises polysilicon.
24. (New) A transistor comprising:
 - a semiconductor body;
 - a source disposed in the semiconductor body;
 - a drain disposed in the semiconductor body and spaced from the source by a channel;
 - a gate dielectric overlying the channel;
 - a barrier layer overlying the gate dielectric, the barrier layer comprising a single layer of WN_x , wherein x is a constant value between 0.3 and 0.5; and
 - a gate conductor overlying the barrier layer.
25. (New) The transistor of claim 24 and further comprising a polysilicon layer between the gate dielectric and the barrier layer.

26. (New) The transistor of claim 25 wherein the gate conductor comprises tungsten.
27. (New) The transistor of claim 26 wherein the barrier layer physically touches the polysilicon layer and also physically touches the gate conductor.
28. (New) The transistor of claim 27 wherein the barrier layer has a thickness in the range of 1 to 50 nm.